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ABSTRACT

A study was done of the postgraduate studies, occupations and impressions of the University of California Davis graduates of 1989-90. Those students witnessed a period of dramatic growth in enrollment and an increase in ethnic diversity at a time of strained resources and facilities at Davis. In four mailings a survey was sent to 3,016 graduates of whom 53 percent responded. Results of the survey found that 43 percent were in graduate or professional schools and over half were working full-time. Upon gradation women continued their education at about the same rate as men. Graduates rated their preparation at Davis for graduate school very highly with the mean rating at 4.22 on a five-point scale. Two of the largest career categories for Davis graduates were biological sciences and engineering. Annual salaries of 1989-90 graduates averaged $25,400. A majority also reported that their education prepared them very well or more than adequately for their current employment rating preparation in writing, problem-solving and research skills most highly. Graduates were most satisfied with the academic environment over all, were highly satisfied with faculty instruction, were generally satisfied with campus programs and services, and were unhappy with the racial harmony on the campus. Included are 15 tables. (JB)

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# RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

Student Affairs
Research and Information

No. 43 November 1991

## 1989-90 Graduates of UC Davis: Their Postgraduate Studies, Occupations and Impressions

HE 025 245

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*No. 43* *November 1991*

## 1989-90 Graduates of UC Davis: Their Postgraduate Studies, Occupations and Impressions

### INTRODUCTION

The opinions and outcomes of alumni serve as important measures of an institution's success in meeting the needs and goals of its undergraduates and providing them a high quality education. In particular, recent alumni share a common perspective from which to evaluate their educational experiences; they spend the first months after completing their baccalaureates adjusting to changing and unfamiliar circumstances. They are well positioned to judge the degree to which they have been prepared by their educational experience to perform new activities and assume greater responsibilities. For this reason, Student Affairs Research and Information regularly conducts surveys of recent baccalaureate degree recipients. This research sets four primary objectives:

- To assess the extent to which new alumni pursue postgraduate education.
- To examine alumni occupational outcomes, including career choice and salary.
- To assess undergraduate preparation for graduate study and work.
- To explore alumni satisfaction with key aspects of the UC Davis academic and social environment.

The graduates of 1989-90 witnessed a period of remarkable change at UC Davis; undergraduate enrollment grew dramatically in both number and ethnic diversity at a time when the campus struggled to meet increasing student needs with strained resources and facilities. Thus, the opinions of this class on the academic and social environment of UC Davis provide a unique measure of how well the campus is meeting these continuing challenges.

#### Survey Respondents

Beginning in May 1991, graduates received up to four mailings of a six-page questionnaire sent at varying intervals. Responses were accepted until October 15, at which time 1,585 (53%) out of 3,016 graduates had responded. Among alumni completing the survey questionnaire, over half were working full-time and 43% were either enrolled in graduate or professional schools or had recently completed postgraduate programs.

The findings presented herein provide valuable insight into the outcomes and opinions of this class. Nonetheless, caution should be used in extrapolating these results to the entire graduating class. As Table 1 (page following) indicates, respondents differ from nonrespondents in several respects. In particular, women and students with higher undergraduate grade point averages were more likely to respond to this survey.

TABLE 1
**Characteristics of Survey Respondents and All 1989-90 Graduates[1]**

| | Respondents (n=1,585) | Graduates (n=3,016) |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 59% | 55% |
| Male | 41 | 45 |
| Ethnicity | | |
| White | 69 | 67 |
| Asian | 16 | 16 |
| Chicano | 3 | 3 |
| Filipino | 3 | 3 |
| Latino | 2 | 2 |
| Black | 2 | 3 |
| American Indian | <1 | 1 |
| Other/Unknown | 6 | 6 |
| UC Davis Mean GPA | 3.04 | 2.97 |
| (Standard deviation) | (.452) | (.452) |
| College | | |
| Ag & Env Sciences | 27 | 27 |
| Engineering | 12 | 12 |
| Letters & Science | 61 | 61 |
| Undergraduate Field of Study | | |
| Animal Sciences | 2 | 2 |
| Applied Economics | 6 | 7 |
| Behavioral Sciences | 8 | 7 |
| Biological Sciences | 17 | 16 |
| Computer Science | 1 | 1 |
| Engineering | 11 | 11 |
| Fine Arts | 2 | 2 |
| Food/Nutrition/ Consumer Sciences | 3 | 3 |
| Foreign Languages | 2 | 1 |
| Interdisciplinary | 8 | 9 |
| Letters | 7 | 7 |
| Mathematics/Statistics | 1 | 1 |
| Physical Sciences | 2 | 2 |
| Plant Sciences | 1 | <1 |
| Resource Sciences | 2 | 2 |
| Social Sciences | 21 | 22 |
| Double Majors | 7 | 6 |

*[1]Characteristics of graduates, taken from an administrative research file, may differ slightly from official University statistics.*

## POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Most undergraduates come to UC Davis with educational aspirations beyond a baccalaureate degree; accordingly, they expect preparation for graduate study. A long term follow-up study of 1973 graduates conducted by Student Affairs Research and Information (1988) indicates that most Davis graduates fulfill their aspirations. Fifteen years after completing a baccalaureate, 64% of 1973 graduates had earned at least one postgraduate degree; 70% had undertaken graduate-level coursework.

TABLE 2
**Degree Programs of 1989-90 Graduates by Gender**
(in percent of graduates continuing their education)

| Degree | Total (n=677) | Men (n=264) | Women (n=413) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Master's Degrees | 40% | 42% | 39% |
| Academic | 31 | 33 | 31 |
| Business | 6 | 8 | 4 |
| Professional[1] | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Doctoral Degrees | 37 | 49 | 29 |
| Medicine | 11 | 16 | 8 |
| Veterinary Medicine | 1 | <1 | 2 |
| Other Health Fields | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Law | 9 | 13 | 6 |
| Academic | 10 | 13 | 7 |
| Credentials | 23 | 9 | 32 |
| Teaching | 16 | 5 | 23 |
| Other[2] | 7 | 4 | 9 |

*[1]Includes Master's degrees in social work, physical therapy and public health.*
*[2]Includes 20 graduates pursuing second bac. degrees.*

Smaller proportions of graduates pursue postgraduate study immediately. Within 12 to 18 months after graduation, 43% of the 1989-90 graduating class were studying for or had just completed a postgraduate degree. Among those currently enrolled in postgraduate study, 86% were studying full-time. As shown on Table 2, the largest group of graduates continue their education at the master's degree level (40%), pursuing degrees in academic areas (31%), business (6%) and professional fields (3%). The second largest

group pursue doctoral degrees (37%) in health (18%), law (9%) and academic areas (10%). The remaining postgraduate students seek teaching credentials (16%) as well as other credentials, primarily in health or business (7%).

Upon graduation, women continue their education at about the same rate as men (44% vs. 41%) although their program choices differ markedly for some degrees, as Table 2 indicates. Considerably larger proportions of male graduates pursue MDs, JDs, and doctorates in academic subjects; conversely, more female graduates enter veterinary medicine and teaching. These findings coincide with those from previous studies.

In addition to differences in degree type, women and men graduates follow different subject areas at the postgraduate level (Table 3). Close to half (47%) of male graduates study in engineering, medicine or law, compared to only 18% among female graduates. As found in previous studies, women are more likely to study in the fields of education (21% vs. 5%), social and behavioral sciences (17% vs. 8%) and other health fields (13% vs. 6%). Despite their historically low representation in the biological sciences at the graduate level, 7% of female graduates (compared with 8% of men) go on to study in this field.

TABLE 3
**Graduate Fields of Study by Gender**
(in percent of graduates continuing their education)

| Graduate Field | Total (n=677) | Men (n=264) | Women (n=413) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Education | 15% | 5% | 21% |
| Medicine | 14 | 17 | 12 |
| Social/Behavioral Sci | 13 | 8 | 17 |
| Other Health Fields | 10 | 6 | 13 |
| Arts/Humanities | 8 | 8 | 9 |
| Engineering | 8 | 18 | 1 |
| Law | 8 | 12 | 5 |
| Biological Sciences | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| Business | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| Math/Computer/ Physical Sciences | 4 | 6 | 3 |
| Food/Nutrition Sciences | 3 | 1 | 5 |
| Veterinary Medicine | 1 | <1 | 2 |
| Other | 2 | 3 | 1 |

Graduates who majored in mathematics/statistics, biological sciences or food/consumer sciences are most likely to pursue further education soon after graduation. As the data on Table 4 indicate, the reverse is true of graduates in computer science or applied economics.

TABLE 4
**Postgraduate Enrollment by Undergraduate Field of Study**

| Undergraduate Field | Percent with Degrees in Progress/Completed |
|---|---|
| **Total (n=1,581)** | **43%** |
| Mathematics/Statistics (n=24) | 63 |
| Biological Sciences (n=261) | 62 |
| Food/Consumer Sciences (n=47) | 57 |
| Foreign Languages (n=27) | 52 |
| Social Sciences (n=341) | 46 |
| Behavioral Sciences (n=124) | 42 |
| Letters (n=113) | 42 |
| Interdisciplinary (n=207)[1] | 41 |
| Physical Sciences (n=25) | 40 |
| Fine Arts (n=33) | 33 |
| Engineering (n=196) | 32 |
| Resource Sciences (n=31) | 29 |
| Animal Sciences (n=26) | 23 |
| Plant Sciences (n=10) | 20 |
| Applied Economics (n=95) | 18 |
| Computer Science (n=21) | 9 |

*[1]Includes respondents with an individual major or a double major in more than one discipline.*

The largest proportion of graduates remain within the University of California system for their first postgraduate degree (33%). About one-fifth continue at UC Davis; other popular UC campuses are San Francisco, Berkeley and Los Angeles. Most other graduates study at out-of-state universities (23%), California private colleges (20%) or California State University campuses (19%). A very large majority of graduates (86%) attend their first or second choice institution.

As with past classes, 1989-90 graduates rate their preparation at UC Davis for graduate school very highly. Using a scale ranging from 5 *(very well prepared)* to 1 *(poorly prepared)*, over three-fourths of graduates report being more than adequately or very well prepared; the mean rat-

TABLE 5
**Preparation for Postgraduate Study by Degree Program**
(in percent of graduates continuing their education)

| Degree | Ratings of Preparation: Very Well/ More than Adequate | Adequate | Poor/Less than Adequate | Mean Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | **76%** | **22%** | **2%** | **4.22** |
| Master's Degrees | 75 | 23 | 2 | 4.22 |
| Academic | 73 | 25 | 2 | 4.20 |
| Business | 75 | 25 | 0 | 4.17 |
| Professional | 94 | 0 | 6 | 4.56 |
| Doctoral Degrees | 76 | 21 | 3 | 4.16 |
| Medicine | 83 | 13 | 4 | 4.30 |
| Veterinary Medicine | 80 | 10 | 10 | 4.20 |
| Other Health Fields | 81 | 17 | 2 | 4.26 |
| Law | 72 | 28 | 0 | 4.12 |
| Academic | 67 | 30 | 3 | 3.97 |
| Credentials | 77 | 21 | 2 | 4.31 |
| Teaching | 78 | 20 | 3 | 4.34 |
| Other | 76 | 24 | 0 | 4.24 |

ing is 4.22 (see Table 5). Among all graduates, those pursuing teaching credentials and health-related doctoral or master's degrees feel most positive.

Mean ratings for graduate school preparation by undergraduate discipline are also very high. Seven disciplines sent 20 or more respondents immediately on to graduate school; mean ratings for graduate school preparation for respondents from these are: food/nutrition/consumer sciences (4.59), biological sciences (4.29), interdisciplinary (4.28), social sciences (4.27), behavioral sciences (4.25), engineering (4.16), and letters (3.96). One possible explanation for these very high ratings is that graduates who move immediately into postgraduate study are especially likely to study in fields related to their undergraduate majors. Overall, 51% of these graduates report their postgraduate field of study to be highly related to their undergraduate majors; another 33% study in fields moderately related.

## OCCUPATIONAL OUTCOMES

Following graduation 57% of 1989-90 alumni worked full-time. Over a third of these graduates obtained jobs prior to leaving UC Davis; 93% were working within six months of graduation. Graduates were asked to select among 19 career categories the one which best described their job. These categories evolved from a list developed by a consortium of University of California career center directors. As Table 6 (page following) indicates, close to one-third of graduates, both men and women, begin working in sales, public relations, finance, banking and other areas of business and industry, despite the fact that UC Davis does not offer a business major.

Not surprisingly, two of the largest career categories for Davis graduates are biological science (14%) and engineering (13%). Men predominate in engineering; almost one-quarter of male graduates begin their careers as engineers, as compared with only 5% of women graduates. Larger proportions of women seek initial employment in biological science and education.

TABLE 6
**Initial Occupations of Graduates Employed Full-time**

| Occupation | Total (n=908) | Men (n=397) | Women (n=511) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biological/Health Scientist | 14% | 10% | 17% |
| Sales/Marketing Professional | 14 | 14 | 15 |
| Engineer | 13 | 24 | 5 |
| Finance/Accountant/Banker | 9 | 8 | 9 |
| Educator/Museum/Library Professional | 9 | 5 | 12 |
| General Business Administrator | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Social Scientist/Service Professional | 8 | 7 | 8 |
| Computer/Math/Physical Scientist | 7 | 10 | 5 |
| Secretary/Clerical Worker | 5 | 1 | 8 |
| Law Enforcement/Military | 4 | 5 | 3 |
| Artist/Designer/Writer | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| Farm/Forest/Other Agriculture Manager | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Other | 3 | 3 | 2 |

Annual salaries of 1989-90 graduates employed full-time average $25,400. Women earn 83% of the salaries of men ($23,200 vs. 28,000), a percentage slightly higher than that found in previous campus studies. Part of this difference stems from the underrepresentation of women in engineering, by far the highest paying field for recent graduates. Nevertheless, as Table 7 shows, male graduates earn higher salaries in most career categories.

TABLE 7
**Mean Annual Salaries[1] of Graduates Employed Full-time**

| Occupation | Total Amount | Total n | Men Amount | Men n | Women Amount | Women n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | **$25,400** | **828** | **$28,000** | **374** | **$23,200** | **454** |
| Biological/Health Scientist | 23,000 | 114 | 22,800 | 34 | 23,100 | 80 |
| Sales/Marketing Professional | 25,100 | 123 | 26,700 | 55 | 23,900 | 68 |
| Engineer | 33,700 | 120 | 33,600 | 93 | 34,100 | 27 |
| Finance/Accountant/Banker | 24,800 | 73 | 27,100 | 31 | 23,100 | 42 |
| Educator/Museum/ Library Professional | 21,000 | 62 | 23,400 | 16 | 20,200 | 46 |
| General Business Administrator | 28,900 | 69 | 31,400 | 30 | 27,000 | 39 |
| Social Scientist/ Service Professional | 22,000 | 62 | 24,600 | 25 | 20,200 | 37 |
| Computer/Math/ Physical Scientist | 30,100 | 60 | 31,100 | 35 | 28,600 | 25 |
| Secretary/Clerical Worker | 18,300 | 41 | 18,200 | 5 | 18,400 | 36 |
| Law Enforcement/Military | 25,200 | 34 | 26,700 | 19 | 23,200 | 15 |
| Artist/Designer/Writer | 20,500 | 36 | 23,600 | 8 | 19,600 | 28 |
| Farm/Forest/ Other Agriculture Manager | 21,100 | 15 | 22,400 | 13 | n/a | 2 |
| Other | 15,900 | 19 | 16,800 | 10 | 14,900 | 9 |

*[1]Salaries are not available for 8% of graduates. Stipends for public service work (e.g. Peace Corps) are not included.*

About 63% of graduates employed full-time work in private business or industry, 15% work in government, 12% in education, 6% in non-profit organizations and 3% are self-employed.

TABLE 8
**Graduates Employed Full-time in Field of Choice[1]**

| Undergraduate Field | Percent Employed in Field of Choice |
|---|---|
| **Total (n=774)** | **75%** |
| Plant Sciences (n=5) | 100 |
| Computer Science (n=17) | 94 |
| Engineering (n=137) | 91 |
| Physical Sciences (n=10) | 90 |
| Behavioral Sciences (n=73) | 82 |
| Food/Consumer Sciences (n=21) | 81 |
| Mathematics/Statistics (n=10) | 80 |
| Animal Sciences (n=19) | 79 |
| Resource Sciences (n=26) | 77 |
| Applied Economics (n=59) | 76 |
| Letters (n=41) | 71 |
| Social Sciences (n=151) | 69 |
| Biological Sciences (n=92) | 66 |
| Interdisciplinary (n=93) | 60 |
| Fine Arts (n=9) | 56 |
| Foreign Languages (n=11) | 18 |

*[1]Excludes those (13%) who have not chosen a career field.*

Other factors besides job type and salary define employment satisfaction for recent graduates. One consideration is whether graduates are able to secure employment in their chosen field. Three-fourths of Davis graduates employed full-time are successful in this regard; although the proportion varies, this finding is true of a large majority of graduates from most undergraduate disciplines (see Table 8).

Another dimension of employment opportunities for graduates is the correspondence between occupation and undergraduate field of study. Not all graduates seek jobs in occupations closely related to their undergraduate majors. But when asked how closely related were their jobs and majors, 61% of graduates described them as highly or moderately related. As the data on Table 9 indicate, this finding is particularly true for graduates from plant sciences, engineering, food/nutrition/consumer sciences and computer science.

A majority of alumni (58%) report that their undergraduate studies prepared them very well or more than adequately for their current employment. On a scale of 5 *(very well prepared)* to 1 *(poorly prepared)*, graduates gave their career preparation a mean rating of 3.73.

TABLE 9
**Preparation for Initial Occupation by Undergraduate Field of Study**
(in percent of graduates working full-time)

| Undergraduate Field | Position Highly/Moderately Related to Major | Preparation Very Good/ More than Adequate | Mean Rating |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | **61%** | **58%** | **3.73** |
| Plant Sciences | 100 | 100 | 4.60 |
| Engineering | 84 | 65 | 3.95 |
| Food/Consumer Sciences | 84 | 78 | 4.26 |
| Computer Science | 82 | 71 | 3.94 |
| Mathematics/Statistics | 79 | 39 | 3.23 |
| Resource Sciences | 77 | 69 | 3.92 |
| Animal Sciences | 74 | 50 | 3.63 |
| Physical Sciences | 73 | 55 | 3.82 |
| Behavioral Sciences | 72 | 50 | 3.67 |
| Biological Sciences | 70 | 55 | 3.71 |
| Applied Economics | 62 | 67 | 3.76 |
| Letters | 48 | 50 | 3.58 |
| Social Sciences | 45 | 50 | 3.30 |
| Interdisciplinary | 43 | 59 | 3.67 |
| Fine Arts | 31 | 40 | 3.30 |
| Foreign Languages | 14 | 62 | 3.92 |

Part of the success Davis graduates experience in the job market can be attributed to extensive opportunities for gaining work experience prior to graduation. Some academic departments as well as The Internship and Career Center offer many internships to undergraduates each year. Almost two-thirds of 1989-1990 graduates held at least one internship; 83% report being very satisfied or satisfied with their experience.

## UNDERGRADUATE IMPRESSIONS

### Preparation for Current Activities

Graduates were asked to rate how important certain skill areas were to their current activities and, then, to rate how well UC Davis prepared them in each specific area. As shown on Table 10, a majority of 1989-90 graduates report that interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and speaking and writing skills are very important to their current activities. The level and ranking of importance of most of these skills is the same for all graduates, regardless of whether they work full-time or pursue graduate study. Graduates working full-time, however, are most likely to report that computer skills are very important to their current activities (45% vs. 30%); graduates in school are more likely to report that research skills are very important (51% vs. 36%).

Graduates rate most highly their undergraduate preparation in writing, problem-solving and research skills. This finding is true regardless of their primary activity. UC Davis receives by far the lowest rating—from all graduates—in the area of computer skills preparation. A majority of graduates (58%) rate their undergraduate preparation in this area as fair or poor.

### Satisfaction with the Academic Environment

Graduates rated fourteen critical components of the UC Davis academic environment using a scale of 5 *(very satisfied)* to 1 *(very dissatisfied)*; their ratings appear on Table 11 (page following). Graduates are most satisfied with the academic environment overall, library facilities and services, and course content and faculty instruction in their major field. Eighty percent or more of graduates are very satisfied or satisfied with these components; mean ratings for each are over 4.00.

Several of these variables appeared on surveys[1] distributed to enrolled students in 1987 and 1990. In general, graduates are more satisfied with the academic environment than enrolled students, with three striking exceptions: computer services and programs, academic advising and class size.

Two aspects of the academic environment directly affected by enrollment increases and budget constraints—availability of courses and class size—received the lowest rating; 30% of graduates are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied.

One keystone of a high quality education is the quality of faculty instruction students receive in their undergraduate majors. The campus has many measures to evaluate faculty instruction; important among these is the satisfaction reported by alumni. As the data on Table 12 (page following) reveal, alumni rate instruction from their major faculty at UC Davis highly; this finding is true among all academic disciplines.

[1] See SAR! reports: *The Davis Academic Environment–1990* (1991) and *The Davis Academic Environment* (1988).

TABLE 10
**Undergraduate Preparation in General Skills**

| Skill Area | Percent Responding *Skill is Very Important* | Rating of Undergraduate Preparation: Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interpersonal | 83% | 18% | 45% | 28% | 10% |
| Problem-Solving | 76 | 26 | 51 | 20 | 3 |
| Speaking | 71 | 12 | 39 | 37 | 11 |
| Writing | 60 | 32 | 46 | 19 | 3 |
| Research | 42 | 28 | 43 | 23 | 7 |
| Computer | 38 | 9 | 33 | 35 | 23 |

TABLE 11

**Satisfaction with Aspects of the Undergraduate Academic Environment**

| Area[1] | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Mean Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall academic experience | 27% | 61% | 9% | 3% | <1% | 4.10 |
| Library facilities and services | 39 | 49 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 4.23 |
| Course content in major field | 28 | 53 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 4.01 |
| Faculty instruction in major field | 28 | 53 | 13 | 5 | 1 | 4.01 |
| Attitude of faculty toward students | 21 | 49 | 20 | 8 | 1 | 3.82 |
| Testing/grading system | 14 | 62 | 17 | 7 | 1 | 3.80 |
| Out-of-class availability of instructors | 18 | 48 | 25 | 7 | 1 | 3.75 |
| Computer services | 21 | 47 | 20 | 10 | 2 | 3.74 |
| TA instruction in major field | 13 | 44 | 30 | 11 | 2 | 3.56 |
| Laboratory facilities | 10 | 46 | 36 | 7 | 1 | 3.55 |
| Classroom facilities | 8 | 53 | 23 | 13 | 2 | 3.52 |
| Academic advising | 15 | 32 | 31 | 16 | 6 | 3.33 |
| Availability of courses | 10 | 43 | 19 | 21 | 7 | 3.29 |
| Class size relative to the type of course | 8 | 39 | 21 | 24 | 7 | 3.18 |

*[1]Ratings of programs and services include only respondents who reported using them.*
*SCALE: 5=Very Satisfied, 4=Satisfied, 3=Neutral, 2=Dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied*

TABLE 12

**Satisfaction with Faculty Instruction in Major Field**

| Undergraduate Field | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Mean Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | **28%** | **53%** | **13%** | **5%** | **1%** | **4.01** |
| Physical Sciences (n=23) | 48 | 35 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 4.30 |
| Animal Sciences (n=25) | 40 | 48 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 4.24 |
| Fine Arts (n=33) | 36 | 55 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4.18 |
| Food/Nutrition/Consumer Sciences (n=47) | 36 | 47 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 4.13 |
| Resource Sciences (n=31) | 35 | 48 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 4.13 |
| Social Sciences (n=335) | 28 | 55 | 11 | 6 | <1 | 4.04 |
| Interdisciplinary (n=206) | 31 | 49 | 15 | 5 | 1 | 4.04 |
| Applied Economics (n=94) | 21 | 63 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 4.03 |
| Biological Sciences (n=261) | 28 | 52 | 13 | 7 | <1 | 4.01 |
| Letters (n=110) | 26 | 54 | 15 | 4 | 2 | 3.99 |
| Engineering (n=192) | 24 | 57 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 3.97 |
| Behavioral Sciences (n=122) | 23 | 53 | 21 | 3 | 1 | 3.93 |
| Foreign Languages (n=27) | 30 | 48 | 7 | 15 | 0 | 3.93 |
| Computer Science (n=21) | 19 | 52 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 3.90 |
| Plant Sciences (n=10) | 30 | 50 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 3.90 |
| Mathematics/Statistics (n=23) | 4 | 57 | 9 | 30 | 0 | 3.35 |

TABLE 13
**Undergraduate Interaction with Faculty**

| Activity | Frequency of Interaction: Very Often or Often | Occasionally | Never |
|---|---|---|---|
| Meet with faculty during office hours | 33% | 64% | 3% |
| Seek academic advice from faculty | 23 | 62 | 15 |
| Talk informally with faculty out of class | 19 | 60 | 21 |
| Work on research projects with faculty | 13 | 27 | 60 |
| Talk to faculty about personal matters | 4 | 33 | 63 |

## Student-Faculty Relationships

Some critics of educational institutions complain that large classes and an emphasis on research in a university frequently interfere with effective undergraduate education because faculty devote too little time to teaching and meeting with students. Despite undergraduate enrollment increases, this imputation does not appear to apply at UC Davis. Not only are graduates highly satisfied with faculty instruction, but they also report frequent or occasional interaction with faculty members. Most importantly, the figures on interaction with faculty reported on Table 13 are almost identical to those reported by alumni who graduated three or seven years ago.

Almost all respondents met with faculty very often or occasionally during office hours, while three-quarters or more sought academic advice from faculty and had discussions with them outside of class. Forty percent of graduates had the opportunity to work on a research project with a faculty member and 37% felt comfortable enough to discuss personal matters with them.

TABLE 14
**Satisfaction with Aspects of the Undergraduate Social Environment**

| Area[1] | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Mean Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UC Davis in general | 37% | 53% | 8% | 2% | <1% | 4.23 |
| Recreational & intramural programs | 53 | 36 | 9 | 1 | <1 | 4.41 |
| UC Davis mass transit services | 46 | 43 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 4.31 |
| Athletic facilities | 29 | 46 | 22 | 3 | 1 | 3.98 |
| Residence hall services & programs | 27 | 47 | 19 | 5 | 2 | 3.91 |
| Personal security/safety at UC Davis | 20 | 52 | 22 | 6 | 1 | 3.83 |
| Opportunities for personal involvement | 18 | 46 | 31 | 4 | 1 | 3.77 |
| Cultural programs | 18 | 43 | 31 | 6 | 2 | 3.70 |
| Student union | 15 | 49 | 27 | 7 | 1 | 3.69 |
| Food services | 15 | 45 | 26 | 11 | 4 | 3.56 |
| UC Davis-sponsored social activities | 9 | 41 | 40 | 8 | 2 | 3.47 |
| Attitude of staff toward students | 11 | 41 | 35 | 9 | 4 | 3.47 |
| Racial harmony at UC Davis | 7 | 38 | 35 | 17 | 4 | 3.27 |
| Concern for student as an individual | 5 | 29 | 38 | 20 | 8 | 3.03 |
| Student voice in college policies | 3 | 19 | 55 | 17 | 7 | 2.95 |

*[1]Ratings of programs and services include only respondents who reported using them.*
*SCALE: 5=Very Satisfied, 4=Satisfied, 3=Neutral, 2=Dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied*

## Satisfaction with the Social Environment

This survey is the first to ask graduates to report their level of satisfaction with certain components of the UC Davis social environment. Previous research on enrolled undergraduates indicates that, although generally satisfied with most campus extracurricular programs and services, students are unhappy with racial harmony on the campus and the degree to which they are treated as individuals.[2] The data on Table 14 (previous page) reveal that, 12 to 18 months after graduation, alumni report similar feelings. Graduates are generally more satisfied with extracurricular programs and services than are enrolled students; they report the highest levels of satisfaction with recreational programs, college mass transit, athletic facilities and residence hall services and programs.

Graduates from 1989-90 report less satisfaction with racial harmony at UC Davis, with the concern expressed for them as individuals, and their voice in college policies. These components of the social environment drew the largest proportions of dissatisfied graduates (21%, 28% and 24%, respectively). Despite these concerns, however, graduates are enthusiastic about UC Davis in general; 90% report being very satisfied or satisfied with the campus. A very large majority of graduates would choose to attend UC Davis again, as shown in Table 15.

[2] See SARI reports: *The Davis Social Environment–1990* (1991) and *The Davis Social Environment* (1988).

## CONCLUSION

In 1977, 1980, 1984, 1988 and 1991, Student Affairs Research and Information surveyed bachelor's degree recipients from UC Davis. Findings from these studies suggest that student satisfaction has changed little. Although the campus is very different from what it was fourteen years ago, the opinions of its graduates remain remarkably similar. Recent alumni, as those from previous years, report that UC Davis prepared them well for both postgraduate study and initial employment. They are very satisfied with the campus in general and a very large majority of them would choose to attend UC Davis if they had to make that choice over again.

Recent alumni, however, share with enrolled students concerns about some aspects of the community at UC Davis—the nature of racial harmony on the campus, the concern expressed for them as individuals and their voice in the many changes implemented and planned for the campus. Although the campus can rightfully be proud of its alumni and the job it has done in preparing them for life after college, it should take care to heed these concerns and to include both former and current students in its decision-making processes. Support from each succeeding class of alumni is critical if UC Davis is to meet the challenges of the 1990s and beyond.

TABLE 15

**If you were considering college today with the advantage of your present knowledge and experience, would you choose to attend UC Davis?**

| Definitely Yes | Probably Yes | Not Sure | Probably No | Definitely No |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43% | 40% | 8% | 7% | 2% |

**Copies of student comments in response to an open-ended question asked in the survey are available from Student Affairs Research and Information and will be distributed to campus administrators, undergraduate colleges and individual academic departments. Lists of employers where alumni work and schools where alumni pursue postbaccalaureate degrees, arranged by undergraduate major, will be available for review by students and other interested parties in the Career Library of The Internship and Career Center.**